

## The Road Safety Education Newsletter Summer 2021

### Summertime!

Summer is here, and days are longer, lighter and warmer, we are all getting out more than we were able to last year, so it's a good time to think about road safety. Last year due to lockdowns the roads were quieter, but they are gradually getting back to the pre-pandemic levels.

During term time children may get to school by walking, cycling or scooting but usually they have a parent or a carer with them. As the summer term draws to a close, walking outings with school can be a good opportunity to teach practical road safety skills, which will stand pupils in good stead for the future. Not just for the school holidays, or coming to summer school but also for the future.



Year 6 pupils will be getting ready for secondary school in a couple of months, and it is helpful for them and their families to think about rehearsing the route there and back.

Encourage them to sit down and plan their route to the new school. They can map out what route to take and talk about it. They can think about which friends they might travel with too. Getting families to practice the route to school is a good way to build confidence.

You can also try talking to them about what they would do if faced with the unexpected. Focus less on instructing them on the rules of the road and more on listening and asking questions to encourage them to think for themselves:

- Where are the safe places to cross the road?
- What should they do if they see their bus and they're on the other side of the road?
- Devices are a major distraction, It's important to explain about putting them away and having earphones out or off while crossing the road. It's just a small step in helping your pupils have safer travel as they step out into the wider world.

#### In this edition

- ◆ Modeshift STARS and JTA news
- ◆ School Streets
- ◆ Walking Bubbles
- ◆ Summer driving tips
- ◆ Keep your pooch safe in the car
- ◆ Bike maintenance tips



## A year of School Streets at Alconbury Primary School

Hannah Mulcrone and Jane Watts Headteachers at Alconbury Primary School share their experience of having a School Streets scheme at their school. School Streets was a scheme implemented in Cambridgeshire partly in response to the pandemic, as School Streets enabled effective social distancing on the school run.

The idea is simple. Each morning and afternoon, the road outside the school gates is temporarily closed to both school and through traffic. This helps families to choose walking which is beneficial for mental and physical health as well as contributing to reducing congestion and helping improve air quality.

*'The dedication and hard work of the volunteers is vital to the success of the School Streets Scheme'*



We have run our 'Schools' Streets' road closure programme now for nearly one whole academic year and it has been a great success. Initially, we weren't sure it would work but actually from volunteers to safety – most things have worked well. It has even had a knock on effect of encouraging more families and even our staff, to walk, scoot or cycle to school. This is because the area outside school looks, feels and is a lot safer.

Some top tips for any schools considering the scheme are:

- ◆ Have lots of volunteers with a few reserves but make sure you have at least two school staff members on the rota too
- ◆ Put the barriers close by as they are fairly heavy to carry,
- ◆ Always have your walkie-talkies on and ready,
- ◆ Wrap up warm in the winter and remember to keep smiling!
- ◆ Don't forget sun cream in summer!





# WAY 2 GO



## Stay Safe Get Active – Walking Bubbles

Some locations are not suitable for a School Streets scheme, in this case the school is offered an alternative scheme called *Stay Safe Get Active Walking Bubbles*.

Any school in the county can take part and schools can generate a 5 minute walking zone map free of charge. In order to do so the school must be registered on the Modeshift STARS school travel website. To register please contact the Road Safety Education team.

[road.safety@cambridgeshire.gov.uk](mailto:road.safety@cambridgeshire.gov.uk)



**Murrow Primary Academy Pupils and their fantastic Walking Bubble gazebo**

Walking Bubbles mean that people who have to travel by car park at least 5-minutes away from school, and walk or scoot the rest of the way. This

**Could your school benefit from this scheme?**

reduces the number of cars parked on pavements outside and close to the school gates, which is one of the main concerns parents have when walking to school. Several schools in Cambridgeshire are now taking part, we were delighted when two more schools signed up to the scheme, helping reduce traffic around their schools and keep children safe.

Murrow Primary Academy and Robert Arkenstall Primary School are two of the schools in Cambridgeshire taking part in the scheme and enjoying the difference it makes.



## Cambridgeshire Schools reach for the STARS!

All Saints Interchurch Academy in March and Barnabas Oley CofE Primary in Great Gransden have received STARS National Platinum Level awards for their outstanding work to increase levels of walking, cycling and other forms of sustainable transport for the journey to school.

Cambridgeshire's Road Safety Education Team are part of the Modeshift STARS scheme. The national schools awards scheme established to recognise schools that have demonstrated excellence in supporting cycling, walking and sustainable travel. .



Ruth, Amanda and the awesome, All Saints Interchurch Academy Junior Travel Ambassadors with their Platinum Award

School Travel Champion at All Saints Interchurch Academy, Ruth Johnson Said "Our aim in taking part in the scheme was to encourage a more sustainable approach to travel and to encourage our children to lead a healthier and more active lifestyle, whilst also reducing congestion and improving air quality outside school. My fellow travel champion Amanda Daley and I are thrilled at the result of the hard work of everyone at our school. We would also like to say a big thank you to the road safety team in the council who have given us so much support."

Barnabas Oley CofE E Primary were delighted with their Platinum award. Headteacher Michelle Downes said: "Since 2018 we have seen a reduction in the number of children travelling to school by car with more now scooting or walking. There has also been a significant increase in the number of children who 'park and stride' – these are children who tend to live further away, they get dropped off some distance from school and complete the last part of the journey on foot.

Cllr Peter McDonald, Chairman of the Highways and Transport Committee at Cambridgeshire County Council said: "This is an excellent achievement and an acknowledgement of the work that we do in safer, sustainable travel in Cambridgeshire. It's the first time the Platinum level award has been available for schools who really go the extra mile with their sustainable school travel efforts.

"Modeshift STARS presents a huge opportunity for us to increase the number of children and young people walking and cycling to schools across Cambridgeshire."



# WAY 2 GO



The Junior Travel Ambassadors

## The Pandemic didn't stop the Junior Travel Ambassadors!

Junior Travel Ambassadors (JTA) across the county have continued to promote active travel in their schools. Promoting the Big Pedal and Walk to School week.

I have been able to meet with the JTA's via Teams and as always, their enthusiasm and energy is an inspiration. This pandemic certainly hasn't stopped them from making sure their fellow pupils and their families stay safe on and near the roads and get more active.

During this last difficult year, we have seen some amazing positives with more people returning to and enjoying walking and cycling and JTA's were keen to help promote how to do this safely. Competitions were organised, JTA's did assemblies via zoom to classrooms. Even meetings with Parish Councils to look at local issues and campaigns to get better cycle routes have taken place.

Well done to you all!!!!

Sadly, last year's JTA's missed out on the celebration day we had planned but they are now FINALLY receiving, their thank you bags and certificates.

Special thanks to Andrew Jones, Deputy Head at Meldreth Primary, who has been supporting the JTA's at Meldreth for the last 5 years with such joy and passion. Good luck Andrew on your new freedom of choice adventure!

Thank you to all the JTA's, I love working with you and I'm looking forward to working with the new JTA's next academic year as well as working with the new schools joining the project.

*Maree, Road Safety Officer and JTA Champion*





## **Students from Neale-Wade Academy create inspiring video project on the importance of road safety**

**Students from Neale-Wade Academy in March have highlighted the importance of road safety for young people through a creative and innovative video project.**

Neale-Wade Academy, which is part of The Active Learning Trust, was invited to take part in the project by Rosemary Mullen, Road Safety Officer at Cambridgeshire County Council.

Following the invitation, five Year 10 Drama students and four Sixth Form Media students created and filmed a series of short film clips to illustrate the dangers young people face involving roads.

Students produced four clips in total. One about bike and scooter safety, one about peer pressure in cars, one about crossing the road, and one about dangers in the dark.

Emma Liversedge, Head of Drama at Neale-Wade Academy, said: “For over four months now our students have been planning, scripting, and filming the road safety project. We have even held a Zoom meeting with film company, Cambridge Film Works to discuss ideas and get feedback.

“Right from the start, our students have learned so much about film and sound and have sometimes worked for over three hours for every two-minute clip to ensure they get it just right. We have all had a great time and can’t wait to see the final product.”

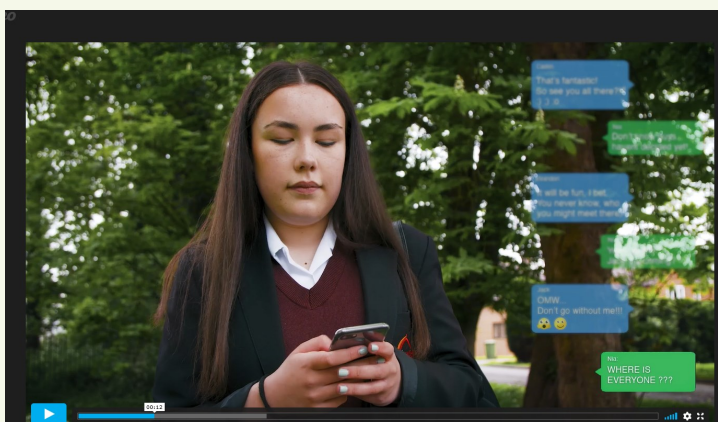
Graham Horn, Principal at Neale-Wade Academy, said: “Neale-Wade Academy has an obligation to protect its students and our aim is always to provide a safe, orderly, caring, and supportive environment.

“By promoting road safety through creative initiatives like this, we can help our parents and teachers have important and meaningful conversations with young people about being safe on the road.”

Rosemary Mullen, Road Safety Officer at Cambridgeshire County Council, said: “It’s inspiring to see the level of commitment the young people at Neale-Wade have shown. We are confident that their road safety message will resonate with other students across the county.

“Neale Wade have become very active in addressing school travel issues which are of concern to students and staff, working to encourage the use of sustainable transport, such as public transport, walking, cycling and educating vulnerable pupils to travel independently and safely. Sustainable travel leads to safer and healthier roads for all.”

The video project is due to be completed by Cambridge Film Works and will be shown to other schools in the Cambridgeshire area.



## Highfield Littleport Academy have cause to celebrate they are officially STARS



Their school has been named as one of just eleven Modeshift STARS Schools of the Region for 2020/21 at the Modeshift Regional Awards on 30<sup>th</sup> June.

It truly is a massive achievement to be recognised as a STARS School of the Region and if the recent pandemic has taught us anything, it is that we must all work together to build a more sustainable, healthier and greener future. As a school Highfield have already demonstrated huge commitment to promoting sustainable and active travel and have in fact been able to achieve a shift to more walking and cycling to school. This is something to celebrate, and now Highfield go to the finals for the awards, to have the opportunity to be selected as SEND sustainable school travel school of the nation on the 9<sup>th</sup> July. Good luck Highfield you have done so well!

The school received the award for their consistent engagement with the LA Road Safety Team since their school first opened. And surveys at school have shown that car use on the journey all the way to school has dropped from 32.69% in 2018/19 to 6.78% in 2019/20. Park and walk, shared taxi and use of the school busses as well as an increase in numbers walking from 0.96% when the first survey was conducted to the most recent survey showing an increase to 16.1% has all led to this award.

In addition, prior to the Covid Pandemic, the school were working with the LA Road Safety team on a road safety education film to help young people at the school prepare for more independent travel.

Yvonne Skillern, headteacher at the school said they were surprised and very pleased to have won the award.

The school are well on their way to national Silver Level accreditation having achieved significant modal shift, and the Road Safety Team look forward to seeing and celebrating their future achievements.



**HIGHFIELD LITTLEPORT ACADEMY**  
An Active Learning Trust School





## 10 Summer Driving Safety Tips

Anyone living in Britain knows that when it comes to the weather, anything other than wind and rain is something of a rarity! But that doesn't mean we shouldn't be properly prepared for driving during our short-lived periods of glorious summer sun.

Driving in hot weather, particularly heatwave conditions, can pose significant challenges and risks to the health and safety of drivers, passengers and passers-by alike. That's why we've compiled a list of 10 essential summer driving safety tips to help you stay safe (and cool) on the roads this summer.

### 1. Start with a cool car

Give yourself the best chance of a relaxing drive by parking in the shade or using sunshades on hot days. Allowing a few extra minutes to open doors and windows to circulate warm air or running your air-conditioning will help cool your car down and avoid immediate discomfort from the heat before setting off.

### 2. Top up your fluids

Car engines get extremely hot in warm weather, especially in standstill traffic, so ensure your coolant is always topped up.

For cars without stop-start technology, it is a good idea to turn off your engine during traffic. Contrary to popular belief, restarting your engine will not burn more fuel than if you are sitting with your engine in 'idle' for more than 10 seconds.

### 3. Keep Hydrated

It's extremely important to keep hydrated when on a journey or stuck in a long traffic jam under the hot sun. Take plenty of cold water with you before heading out on longer journeys – enough for you and all of your passengers. Investing in insulated drinks bottles for the children and pets is a great way to keep a source of cold water in the car, particularly after a long day of adventure.

### 4. Consider allergic reactions

According to the NHS, around 10 million people suffer from hay fever in England alone – a condition which can be very problematic when driving.

The last place you want to be constantly sneezing is at the wheel of a car going at 70mph, but medication can have side effects such as blurred vision and drowsiness, which could impair a person's ability to drive.

Therefore, always check the label of your medication before taking it especially if you're planning on driving shortly afterwards.





## 5. Get a lift to the pub

On hot, sunny days people enjoy going to gardens, barbeques and outdoor events as well as going for a pub meal. As a result, summer drink driving becomes a major problem each year.

Before heading out to a summer social event, consider how you are going to get home. Don't drink if you're driving and find another method of transport if you want to drink. This way you can enjoy the hot weather without putting yours and other **people's lives at risk**.

## 6. Never leave your dog behind

Too many people still think it is acceptable to leave their dog in the car during the summer. The RSPCA says that if it's 22 degrees outside, the inside of a car can reach 47 degrees within one hour, which can lead to dangerous and heart-breaking consequences.

Even parking in shade or leaving the windows down does not make the car a safe place for a dog in summer. So, unless you can take your dog with you wherever you go, leave your pet safely at home.

## 7. Avoid Sun Glare

Impaired vision from the sun is a common cause of accidents during the summer. Replace worn windscreen wipers to help keep your windscreen clean and use sunglasses and overhead sun visors to help block out the sun from your eyes.

Windscreens also get very dirty in dry weather and marks can amplify sun glare. Plenty of windscreen washer fluid will help you maintain a clear view in the sun – especially when travelling when the sun is low in the sky, typically during your commute.

## 8. Maintain tyre condition

Tyre blowouts are a more common occurrence in hotter weather.

According to the AA, tyres with existing damage that are under inflated will become even more aggravated in higher temperatures, which increases the likelihood of blowouts and punctures.

Before setting off, it is extremely important to check that your tyre pressure is at the optimum level, as well as anything you may be towing.

## 9. Look out for more than just cars

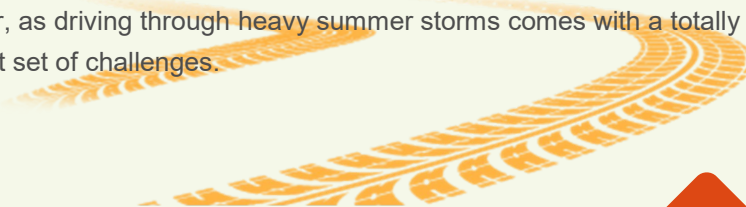
Drivers have to share the roads with a lot more than just other cars during the summer months. Better weather and longer days attract far more tractors, caravans, horse riders, cyclists and walkers.

It's vital to remain alert when driving along country lanes, and to avoid any risks when overtaking that could cause an accident.

Motorcyclists are also out and about, so always look twice to ensure you're aware of what's around you.

## 10. Prepare for changes in weather

Finally, in Britain we often pay the price for good weather we get. Be prepared to adapt your driving style in the event of any sharp changes in weather, as driving through heavy summer storms comes with a totally different set of challenges.



## Do you take your dog in the car?

48% of UK dog owners could be breaking the Highway Code by not restraining their dogs properly in the car, says the charity, The Dogs Trust

Driving with your pet is sometimes a necessity, whether it's a short trip to the vet or a longer trip for a summer fun weekend away. Many people don't know the safest way to travel with their dogs though and some are unknowingly breaking the law.



### What is the law on driving with a dog or dogs in the car?

Rule 57 of the Highway Code states: "When in a vehicle make sure dogs or other animals are suitably restrained so they cannot distract you while you are driving or injure you, or themselves, if you stop quickly."

A seat belt harness, pet carrier, dog cage or dog guard are ways of restraining animals in cars."

Failure to comply with this can result in a maximum fine of £2,500 and nine penalty points and if an unrestrained pet has caused an accident, insurers are unlikely to pay out.

If you're unsure of the best ways to keep them safe when travelling, read our guide below to learn the basics.

### Restrain you pet pup

The Highway Code states a seat belt harness, pet carrier, dog cage or dog guard are the appropriate ways of restraining animals in cars.

It is generally considered to be safer for the dog and less distracting for the driver if your dog is transported in the back of the car as opposed to the front seat.

Depending on the size of your car and size and temperament of your pooch, there are a few different options available to best restrain your dog.

### Dog guards

Dog guards are fitted to your car between the back of the seats and the boot area, to provide a restricted space for your dog to be contained within. This option is great for dogs that prefer to have space to roam or look around but provides limited protection from impact with the side or rear windows. Your vehicle manufacturer or alternative provider will be able to supply steel animal guards, which divide the boot area from the cabin to keep your pet safe while travelling.

### Dog crates

Another option is to make your pets comfortable in a cage. If your dog is happy to sit quietly in a crate or cage, and provided you have enough room for a cage to house your particular dog's size, then this is a secure option for safely restraining your dog in the car. The crate should be large enough to house your dog comfortably and allow them to sit up and stretch, but not so large that the dog would be thrown around in the case of an accident.

### Dog harnesses

Small dogs are often held by passengers, but it is in fact still essential to use a harness. This prevents dogs escaping into other areas of the car, causing a distraction for the driver. Available in all shapes and sizes, the harness fits around the dog's chest and attaches to the seatbelt on the back seat – keeping your pet safe if you were to brake heavily or be involved in an accident.





## Keep your dog hydrated

It's very important that you take regular stops for hydration as well as comfort breaks. Pack a large bottle of water and a bowl and take regular breaks from driving to give them a drink.

Also take your dog for a long walk before setting off to burn off some energy for a more relaxed journey and avoid feeding your pets for two hours before travelling as many pets suffer from motion sickness.

Even though you may have the windows open, or the air conditioning on full, pets are typically in the boot of the car and often under the full glare of the sun. As it gets hot back there during long journeys, it's advisable fix window sunshades to keep your pooch comfortable.

## Never leave your dog in the car alone!

It's not just important to keep your pet safe while on the go - it can be dangerous to leave them unattended in a parked car, even for a few minutes.

Some owners risk leaving their dog in a car if precautions are taken, such as parking under a tree or leaving a window open. But partially lowering any windows has no significant effect on the temperature inside a parked car. In fact, The Dogs Trust stress that less than 20 minutes in a hot car can prove fatal to a dog should its body temperature exceed 41°C.

On the rare occasion that you see an animal in distress inside a car and you're concerned about its welfare, try to alert the owner. If this isn't possible, contact the police or the RSPCA via their 24-hour helpline: 0300 1234 999.

Have a lovely safe summer with your dog!



## Time to dust off your bike!

No one is born with bicycle maintenance skills. It is something you learn by doing simple bicycle maintenance yourself, or preferably by being taught by someone with experience. If you are going to get out and about on your bike this summer after a busy term in school, here are some top DIY bike maintenance tips. Keeping your bike maintained helps keep you safe and in the long run will also save you money. Hopefully you will have lots of enjoyable cycle rides this summer and if possible, when school starts again see if you can cycle to school sometimes.

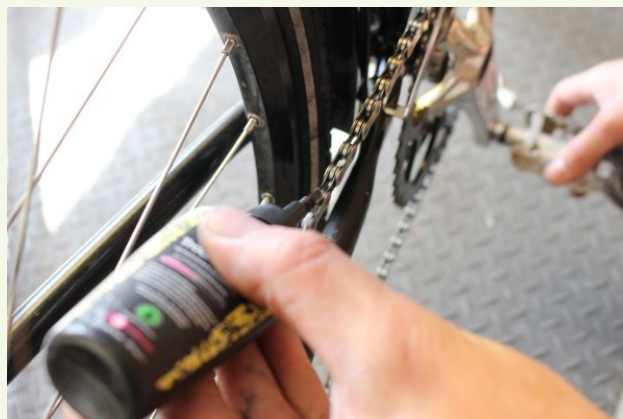
### Top 5 (DIY) bicycle maintenance tips for beginners

1.) Keep the chain clean and lubricated,.



The rattling sound you sometimes hear coming from a bike, is often the sound of metal rubbing against metal, mud and dirt because the lubrication has worn off the chain. Regularly cleaning and lubricating the chain extends its use. Chains are not cheap to replace, and having a dirty rusty chain is a sign of a badly cared for bike. It will be much smoother in use with a little care and will give you a much more pleasant cycle ride.

To clean the chain You will need disposable rags, bike oil, some degreaser an old toothbrush or similar sort of brush and a flat headed screwdriver to pry off the larger chunks of dirt from the rear derailleurs, jockey wheels and chain rings. Get all the dirt you possibly can get off the chains, sprockets and chainwheels. After everything is nice and clean, turn the cranks slowly backwards and simultaneously apply a drop of bike oil on the inside of every link on your chain. The more often you clean and maintain, the less time it takes to do it. Why not clean the frame and wheels while you're at it?





## 2.) Keep your tires inflated!



One of the things that influence the quality of your bike ride is tire pressure. If the pressure is too low, you need to work a lot harder to keep the same speed than you would with proper high pressure. And you will get flats more easily, especially when hitting a pothole or a curb. One of the most essential must-have tools you should own is a quality floor pump with pressure gauge. Check the suggested pressure from the side of your tires. The rear tire should have more pressure as it is taking more of the rider's weight than the front. Make sure you check your tire pressure at least once every two weeks.

If you're not going to ride your bike for a long time, for example six months or longer, try to remember to keep the tires inflated even during the pause. If this is not possible, take the tires off completely. By doing this you prevent cracks on the sides of the tires.

## 3.) Keep the nuts and bolts tight, but don't overtighten them



Keep all the screws, bolts and nuts where they belong in your bike by checking regularly if they are loose. It is annoying if you lose the screw holding your mudguards in place and having to listen that rattling and banging sound all the way home. Note that with some of the newer bikes the parts have the maximum torque limit written on them and you can buy tools that apply only a specified amount of torque. When you are buying a new bike, ask your bike shop to give you a bag of spare nuts and bolts. You should get them free, as part of the sales service but you may need to ask.

## 4.) Make sure your brakes are adjusted correctly, check and change brake pads if necessary



If you like to cycle fast, be sure you can stop effectively when necessary. If you need to pull the brake lever until it touches the handlebar and almost nothing happens, then you need to adjust the brake pads closer to the rim (or your disc).

You can do this by tightening the adjusting barrel (if your brakes have one) in the brake lever or the brake arm end. Tightening the screw moves the pads closer to the rim (or disc). You may also need to unscrew the bolt holding the wire, tighten the wire and then screw the bolt back on. Before tightening the bolt again, twist the adjuster holding the wire and the wire housing to the loosest setting. This way you have more room to adjust the brakes.

It is also important to keep both the pads and the braking surface clean from dirt and oil. Dirty pads wear out themselves and the braking surface substantially faster.

## 5.) How to fix a flat tyre



There are a lot of good videos in showing you how to prepare, glue a patch on and remount the tire. If you start getting lots of flats with the same wheel, check your tire and the inside of the rim for sharp objects or a protruding spoke.

First watch a video on how to remove a tire from the rim and how to put it back on. You will need two plastic tire levers and some patience. Practice will make perfect with this as it is a skill that takes a little time to learn.

Learning these five skills and practicing them will result in more enjoyable, safer cycling. Take care of your bike and it will take care of you. Have fun cycling this summer!